

Llyswen Methodist Episcopal Church  
308 Coleridge Avenue  
Llyswen Neighborhood  
Altoona  
Blair County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5887

HABS  
PA,  
7-ALTO.  
139 -

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
LLYSWEN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Location: 308 Coleridge Avenue

Date of Erection: 1915-16

Architect: F. J. Shollar

Description: Functionally, this church has two parts: a cross-gabled sanctuary with a square entry/bell tower facing Coleridge Avenue, and a contiguous side-gabled Sunday School building with an entry porch on Halleck Place. The wood-frame structure has a stone foundation and a yellow brick veneer, divided by a water table of smooth limestone. The character of the design is vaguely Gothic, but the detailing is both modern and conservative; the open eaves are free of brackets, tracery or truss work. Horizontal and vertical emphases are balanced in a form that conveys ample mass even at this modest scale. Simple exposed trusses in the gable of the front porch have been boxed in. Wood framing divide the sanctuary's wide stained-glass windows into pointed Gothic arches, an effect repeated in the bell tower openings. The tower has a projecting wood cornice with a panelled wood parapet above and squared pinnacles at each corner. There is an elliptical stained-glass fanlight over the double doors of the sanctuary entrance, and both porches have square wood columns on stone piers.

History: Before this building was completed in 1916, the Methodist congregation in Llyswen met first in the home of Arthur R. Olewine at 205 West Whittier Ave., then in the Baker School building, and later in a storeroom on the present site of the Ward Avenue Presbyterian Church. In 1906 the trustees of the congregation purchased this lot at the corner of Coleridge Avenue and Halleck Place for \$800, and when the Presbyterians bought the lot on Ward Avenue in 1907 the Methodists commissioned contractor Patrick Finn to construct a small, wood-frame chapel on their own lot. One week and \$450 later, they had a meeting house that more or less served their needs for nine years. The chapel was moved to the present site of the parsonage when construction on this building began in 1915. The architect was F. J. Shollar. J. C. Orr and Son contracted for the construction, which cost \$6,300. The new sanctuary was dedicated on February 20, 1916. When construction began on the parsonage in 1919, John W. Edgely purchased the old frame chapel, moved it to 301 Coleridge Ave., and converted it into a bungalow by widening the building, adding a second story and a brick porch, and encasing the original structure in brick veneer. In 1989, Llyswen Methodist Episcopal Church celebrated the 75th anniversary of the dedication of its congregation with a block party on Coleridge Avenue.

Sources: Maps: 1909, 1920, 1932, 1951. Deed books: 166/622, 166/625, 237/472. "Anniversary Program, Llyswen Methodist Episcopal Church," February 16-23, 1936. "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Dedication," January 19-26, 1941. Interviews: James E. Spence Jr., 314 Coleridge Ave., July 15, 1989. Grace Kerns, 5410 Montrose Ave., August 7, 1989.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. An overview of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) and an overview of Llyswen (HABS No. PA-5787) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Kathy Edwards in the summer of 1989 under the supervision of Alison K. Hoagland, HABS historian, and Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian. Edwards's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.